

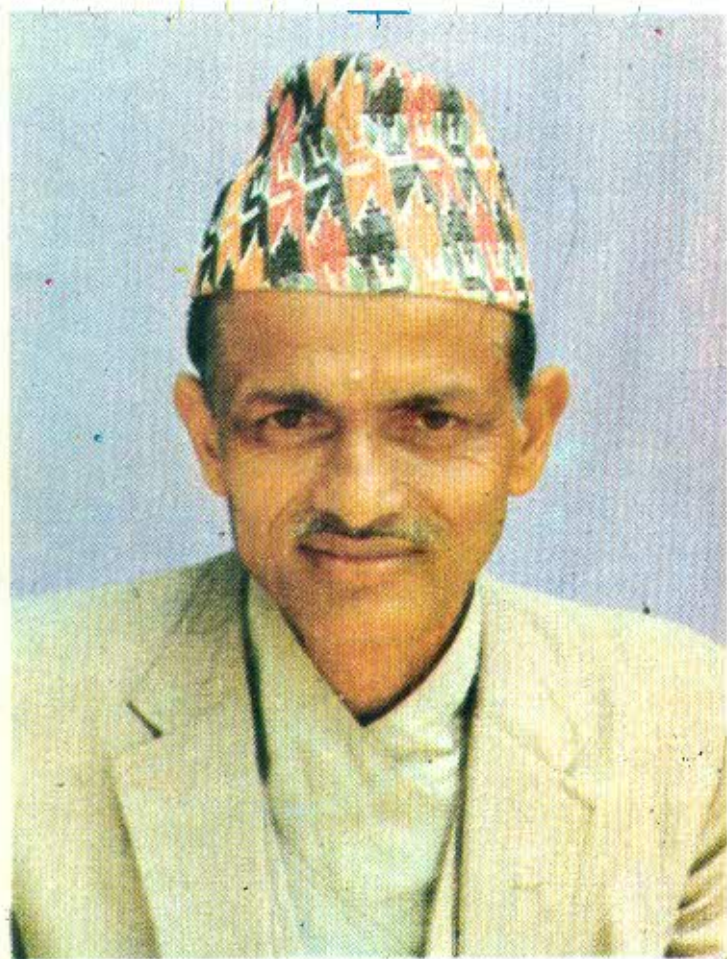
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Sahitya Akademi
in collaboration with
Himalayan Writers' Forum

meet the author

Tulsiram Sharma 'Kashyap'





“A man who contributes to the well being of his society, country and the world at large will always be remembered by posterity. One who selflessly endeavours to provide proper direction becomes an icon of society, country and the human race, and will be revered as such.”

Thus Tulsiram Sharma ‘Kashyap’ portrays mankind’s nobler characteristics in his essay on *Mahanta*. He considers compassion and benevolence to be an infallible means to achieve truer purpose and profundity of human existence. He righteously strives to emphasize the need for developing an altruistic attitude in today’s confused world where every man believes in, and acts to stand only for himself. The original man is an undefiled entity in the grand game of being and becoming. Selfishness in man, he believes, is the forbidden fruit that mercilessly defiles this original man, dragging him down from his cosmic constituency to the utterly chaotic environ of human turbulence.

Beholder of such a philosophical view, Tulsiram

Sharma ‘Kashyap’, the fourth son in the family, was born to Chandralall Sharma and Kaushalya Devi on 11 February 1939, in Paam village, Chujachen, East Sikkim. His early education began in the village school established by his father. His second eldest brother, Jai Narayan, exerted immense influence on the infant Tulsiram by way of introducing the fascinating world of the *Gita* and *Krishna Charita* to him. Such literary excursions inculcated a reverential love in him for learning and reciting sacred *slokas*. Later, he studied in the Government School in Rongli Bazar for two years and, then, went back to his own village to continue education in the newly established Deshoddhar Vidyapith. He also studied in the Mission School in Namthang, hopped to Pandam School and, finally, passed his School Final Examination from Namchi School in 1962. When he was in Class X, Tulsiram, a potential poet, published his first poem, ‘Kalpana’ in *Udaya* (1962), a magazine brought out from Benaras.

After School Final Examination, Tulsiram took up a teaching job in the remote and sparsely populated village of Kunu in Yangang, South Sikkim. The place at once shattered his romantic notions of a colourful and vibrant village life. In absence of development and modernity, Kunu, then, was a sleepy village where time seemed to have taken a siesta. The prevailing atmosphere of the village was quite stifling and effectively suffocated young Tulsiram’s tender aspirations. Looking for an escape from an overwhelming sense of desolation, the world of literature



With wife Heeralata, sons Santosh and Binod, daughters Sabita and Binita

unfolded before him, translating itself into a plentiful promised land for 'Kashyap'. Unhesitatingly he took a plunge. He started ambling through many enchanting literary labyrinths, introducing himself to many scholarly disciplines in the process.

'Kashyap' was, thus, able to convert a hostile circumstance to a most fruitful episode of his life and, escorted by enlightening literary adventure, gained much in experience and insight. Later, as a trainee in the Temi Teacher Training Institute, he had the good fortune of coming into close association with the Principal, Padamsingh Subba, one of the founder members of Sikkim's first literary society, Apatan, and other inspired litterateurs. While in the company of such talented people, 'Kashyap' was aptly

inspired to write and publish *Ankura*, a collection of poems, in 1965. In *Ankura*, we find 'Kashyap' being slowly drawn towards the cause of humanism. This collection, dedicated to his mother, is a discernible eulogy to maternal gentleness, love and affection.

In 1968 Tulsiram Sharma joined in holy matrimony with Heeralata Sharma of Bermoik Tokal. In due course of time the couple were blessed with two sons, Santosh (28) and Binod (26); and two daughters, Sabita (24) and Binita (22).

During his teaching career 'Kashyap' was continuously transferred to various schools. Thus he taught in Temi, Simik Lingzey and Chujachen. Immediately after his graduation in 1971, he was promoted to 'graduate teacher' and posted to

Rhenock and Chujachen Junior High Schools. From 1975 to 1977 he was sent on deputation to S.S.B. where he discharged his duties in the capacity of Circle Organiser. On completion of deputational tenure, he returned to Rhenock to rejoin his teaching job. But he was not to be associated with the teaching profession for long. His destiny was drafting a different, and more exalted, role for him. He resigned from the teaching job in 1979. For a brief period he indulged in business and, later, joined politics. Joining politics proved to be a boon in active career for 'Kashyap'.

Throwing himself wholly into the vortex of active politics 'Kashyap' was elected as a member of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly from the Rigu Constituency in 1979, and was immediately catapulted into the centre stage of postmerger Sikkimese politics. He became a minister and held portfolios of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Publicity and Information, and Education. He was elected again in 1985 from the same constituency and became the Speaker of Sikkim Legislative Assembly. Through all these hectic years he was never divorced from his first passion, literature, and wrote and published many of his books during this period.

His writings speak largely of social turpitudes and inequalities in the society. But interwoven into this web of social maladies, is his many accounts of Sikkim's pristine beauty and majestic bearings. Sikkim is a subject of continued passion and fascination for him. In many of his works we find unrestrained celebration of this ancient and mythical land eternally



With Sahitya Akademi President
Shri U. R. Anantha Murthy

embroidered with colourful contours and enlivening legends.

Nevertheless, his readers cannot ignore his stern deprecation of social ostentation, lowly selfishness and vile faithlessness in his works. His excellent portrayal of everyday life in his collection of short stories, *Sansar Yestai Rahechha* (1966) and *Tasveer* (1987) is a valiant effort to salvage, and eventually elevate, the mind and spirit of man to a realm of social magnificence.

Tulsiram Sharma's writings have found wide acclaim and, as such, he has been honoured with several literary awards viz., Bhanu Puraskar, Sikkim (1987), Sahitya Akademi Award (1990), Madan Smarak Vykhanamala, Benaras (1990) and hosts of other felicitations conferred on him by well standing literary and social organisations, among which Nepali Sahitya Prachar Samiti, Siliguri, and Sikkim Sahitya Parishad, Gangtok, stand out prominently.

A prolific litterateur, he has abundantly indulged himself in the various disciplines of literature. Be it a soothing poetry, a mesmerizing story and drama, or an invigorating essay, his tireless pen has successfully

sailed to many glittering literary harbours. But his excellent literary odyssey ultimately seems to have found its majestic moorings in his three Mahakavyas and four Khandakavyas that include *Indrakil* in Hindi too.

This literary anchorage, if nothing else, has assured Tulsiram Sharma 'Kashyap' a permanent place among the literary luminaries in the annals of Sikkimese literature.

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Gangtok.

TASVEER (1987) Ankura
Prakashan, Gangtok

NOVEL

SANKALPA (1988) Ankura
Prakashan, Gangtok

COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

KALPANA (1991) Ankura
Prakashan, Gangtok.

DRAMA

SWARGAMA NEHRU (1989)
Ankura Prakashan, Gangtok

EPIC (KHANDAKAVYA)

KALA-KAMAL (1967 and 1988)
Ankura Prakashan, Gangtok

RITU-RAGA (1989 and 1992)
Ankura Prakashan,
Gangtok.

ANURAG (1990) Ankura
Prakashan, Gangtok.

EPIC IN HINDI (KHANDAKAVYA)

INDRAKIL (1992) Jana Paksha



Garlanding the statue of Poet Bhanu during Bhanu Jayanti



Receiving the Sahitya Akademi Award

Prakashan, Gangtok.

EPIC (MAHAKAVYA)

JANMABHUMI (1986) Ankura
Prakashan, Gangtok.

AAMA (1988) Aajako Sikkim
Prakashan, Gangtok.

MANTHAN (1993) Ankura
Prakashan, Gangtok.

HISTORY

SIKKIM : HIJODEKHI
AAJASAMMA (1996)
Ankura Prakashan,
Gangtok.

COUNTRIES VISITED

Nepal, United Kingdom,
Germany, Switzerland, the
Netherlands (during
ministerial tenure); U.A.R.,
France, Egypt, Italy (in the
capacity of the Speaker of
the Sikkim Legislative
Assembly).

A CHRONOLOGY

- 1939 Birth
- 1962 Passed School Final Examination
- 1965 First collection of poems, *Ankura*, published
- 1968 Marriage
- 1971 Graduation
- 1979 Resigned from teaching assignment
Elected in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly
- 1985 Became Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
- 1987 Received the Rohanu Puraskar, Sikkim
- 1988 *Sankalpa*, a novel, published
- 1990 Received the Sahitya Akademi Award
- 1993 Published *Manthan*, an epic poem